

REVEALING THE ESSENCE OF THE SACRED

Vikki Nash

Bachelor of Visual Arts (University of Ballarat)
Diploma of Ceramics (University of Ballarat)

Partial fulfilment of requirements for
Master of Arts

Arts Academy
School of Education and Arts
University of Ballarat
PO Box 745
Ballarat, Victoria, 3353
Australia

October 2013

ABSTRACT

This research project, 'Revealing the Essence of the Sacred', examines the archetypal forms of the dot, cross and the mandorla. Their appearance and meaning are traced back through history and across cultures. The commonalities between the physical act of making imagery using these pared back abstracted forms and the experience, in the maker, of embodied immanence are examined. By extension the research also considers how creating and contemplating artwork can be a curative spiritual practice. I identify how the artwork correlates with, and is informed by, my spiritual practice. The research takes a phenomenological approach and is based on my own subjective experience of bodily sensed knowledge whilst making and viewing the image.

Intuitively accessing the source or essence of the subject matter has been a primary motivating factor in the images used in the artwork. This approach is grounded in the innate belief that what has been distilled and purified has great transformative power. Informing this is an alignment with both the Jungian Collective Unconscious and the ancient Indian spiritual system of Tantra.

The artworks, rendered within a ritualistic structure and using abstracted form, are an individual expression of the universality of intuitive mark making. A similar connection is established in the practice of contemporary artists who strongly identify with a level of spirituality in their personal lives.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Except where explicit reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere, or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for, or been awarded another degree or diploma. No other person's work has been relied upon or used without due acknowledgement in the main text and bibliography of the thesis.

.....
Candidate Date
Vikki Nash

.....
Principal Supervisor Date
Dr. Jill Orr

.....
Associate Supervisor Date
Dr. Carole Wilson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my Principal Supervisor Dr. Jill Orr and my Associate Supervisor Dr. Carole Wilson of the School of Education and Arts, University of Ballarat for their clear direction and encouragement.

I also gratefully acknowledge the understanding and support from my fellow Post Graduate students whose views and opinions have been invaluable.

Finally I would like to thank my partner Rod, and my daughters Peggy and Eva, for their affirming encouragement and unwavering belief in me.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE – Embodied Meaning	3
Embodied Archetype	3
Embodied Cognition	9
Embodied Immanence	11
CHAPTER TWO – ‘A Recomposed Neutrality of Being’	24
Dot	26
Cross	28
Mandorla	28
Prescription	30
Ritual	32
Line	33
Art as Meditation	34
CONCLUSION	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY	56

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE NO.		PAGE NO.
1.1	Mandorla illustration.	17
1.2	Mandorla shaped rock incision, 30,000 BC, La Ferrassie, France. (Reprinted from http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f1/Vulves_gravees - La Ferrassie - MNP.jpg (accessed August 8, 2013).	17
1.3	Unidentified artist, Spanish (Catalan), <i>Christ in Majesty with Symbols of the Four Evangelists</i> , 12 th century. Museum of Fine Arts Boston. (Reprinted from http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/christ-in-majesty-with-symbols-of-the-four-evangelists-31898) (accessed 19 August, 2013).	18
1.4	Marion Borgelt, <i>Void Series: XV</i> , 1993. (Reprinted from http://www.marionborgelt.com/wordpress/2011/04/void-series-mnemonasuite/) (accessed 10 August, 2013). Courtesy of the artist.	18
1.5	Marion Borgelt, <i>Void Series: Equilibrium</i> , 1994-97. (Reprinted from http://www.marionborgelt.com/wordpress/2011/04/void-series-mnemonasuite/) (accessed 10 August, 2013). Courtesy of the artist.	19
1.6	Katherine Boland, <i>Grey Shield</i> , 2012. (Reprinted from http://www.katherineboland.com/#!grey-shield/c1hw8) (accessed 19 August, 2013). Courtesy of the artist.	19
1.7	Katherine Boland, <i>Part of Nature #3</i> , 2011. (Reprinted from http://www.katherineboland.com/#!part-of-nature-3/cv1c) (accessed 19 August, 2013). Courtesy of the artist.	20

- 1.8 Judy Watson, *two halves with bailer shell*, 2002, National Gallery of Australia. (Reprinted from Martin-Chew, Louise, and Watson, Judy. *Blood Language*. Australia: Miegunyah Press, 2009). 20
- 1.9 *Fertilised World Egg*, 18th century, Rajasthan, Private Collection. Record 7Ar.056, ARAS Online [online archive]. New York: The Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism. (Reprinted from <http://search.aras.org/record.aspx?ARASnum=7Ar.056>) (accessed 19 August, 2013). 21
- 1.10 *Pure Consciousness: The Metacosmic Void*, 18th century, Rajasthan, Private Collection. (Reprinted from Mookergee, Ajit. *Ritual Art of India*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1985). 21
- 1.11 Ana Mendieta, *Siluetas Series*, 1973-78. Estate of Ana Mendieta. (Reprinted from <http://www.virginiamiller.com/exhibitions/19902/AnaMendieta.html>) (accessed 19 August, 2013). 22
- 1.12 Wassily Kandinsky, *Several Circles*, 1926, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. (Reprinted from Becks-Malorny, Ulrike. *Wassily Kandinsky 1866-1944: The Journey to Abstraction*, Hong Kong: Taschen, 2007). 22
- 1.13 James Turrell, *Bindu Shards*, 2010. (Reprinted from <http://jamesturrell.com/artwork/bindu-shards/>) (accessed 19 August, 2013). 23
- 2.1 Vikki Nash, *Part to a Whole Series: Cosmic Egg*, 2011. Collection of the artist. 37
- 2.2 Sohan Qadri, *Asha 1*, (Reprinted from Shen, Anna, ed. *Seeker: The Art of Sohan Qadri*, India: Mapin Publishing, 2004). Courtesy of Sundaram Tagore Gallery. 37

2.3	Rover Thomas, <i>Roads meeting</i> , 1987, National Gallery of Australia. (Reprinted from http://artsearch.nga.gov.au/Detail-LRG.cfm?IRN=77119) (accessed 8 August, 2013).	38
2.4	Vikki Nash, <i>Part to a Whole Series: Sense</i> , 2012. Collection of the artist.	38
2.5	Vikki Nash, <i>Transducer Series: Cross</i> , 2013. Collection of the artist.	39
2.6	Vikki Nash, <i>Part to a Whole Series: Mandorla 1</i> , 2011. Collection of the artist.	40
2.7	Vikki Nash, <i>Prescription Series: Signifier</i> , 2013. Collection of the artist.	41
2.8	Vikki Nash, <i>Prescription Series: Signifier</i> , 2013. Detail Collection of the artist.	42
2.9	Judy Watson, <i>headhunter</i> , 2006, Private collection. (Reprinted from Martin-Chew, Louise, and Watson, Judy. <i>Blood Language</i> . Australia: Miegunyah Press, 2009).	43
2.10	Judy Watson, <i>heart shield</i> , 2008, (Reprinted from http://www.milanigallery.com.au/artwork/heart-shield) (accessed 8 August 2013).	43
2.11	Ethiopian Healing Scroll. (Reprinted from Mercier, Jacques. <i>Art That Heals: The Image as Medicine in Ethiopia</i> . Germany: Prestel, 1997).	44
2.12	Vikki Nash, <i>Part to a Whole Series: Dual Mandala</i> , 2011. Collection of the artist.	44
2.13	Vikki Nash, <i>Part to a Whole Series: Grail</i> , 2011. Collection of the artist.	45
		46

2.14	Vikki Nash, <i>Prescription Series: Corporeal Ladder</i> , 2013. Collection of the artist.	
2.15	Vikki Nash, <i>Prescription Series: Corporeal Ladder</i> , 2013. Detail. Collection of the artist.	47
2.16	Navajo Sand Painting, Bead Chant, Miguelito. (Reprinted from http://www.ubu.com/ethno/visuals/navajo02.html) (accessed 19 August, 2013).	48
2.17	Vikki Nash, <i>Transducer Series: Dyad</i> , 2013. Collection of the artist.	49
2.18	Vikki Nash, <i>Transducer Series: Egg</i> , 2013. Collection of the artist.	50
2.19	Vikki Nash, <i>Transducer Series: Egg</i> , 2013. Detail. Collection of the artist.	51
2.20	Vikki Nash, <i>Transducer Series: Merge</i> , 2013. Collection of the artist.	52
2.21	Vikki Nash, <i>Transducer Series: Merge</i> , 2013. Detail. Collection of the artist.	53
2.22	Vikki Nash, <i>Lemniscate</i> , 2011. Collection of the artist.	54
2.23	<i>Shiva Linga</i> , 2002, Rajasthan, Private Collection. (Reprinted from Jamme, Franck Andre. <i>Tantra Song: Tantric Painting from Rajasthan</i> . Los Angeles: Siglio, 2011).	55

INTRODUCTION

This research project examines the archetypal forms of the dot, the cross, and the mandorla represented as abstract imagery in artwork.¹ It is contended that these are innately recognisable as part of the repository of forms from the collective human unconscious as proposed by Carl Jung.² The experience of the archetype, by definition, is common to all individuals. By enabling a physical representation it permits other individuals seeing the same image to connect with its archetypal meaning.³ This then triggers a non-verbal response in the psyche and emotional body, as these archetypes are initially not recognised intellectually but rather with an embodied situated cognition. The appearance and meaning of the archetype is traced back through history and across cultures, and is explored in the context of art.

Over the past two decades an interest in spirituality has directed my study and work with various modalities such as yoga, meditation, tantra, and Shamanic practices. Common to all of these, and in fact it could be argued a basic premise of all spiritual practice, is a striving to reveal, articulate and connect with a source, or essence of the subject matter. Ajit Mookerjee illustrates this by explaining that in the Tantric tradition the adept, through inward contemplation, realises that: "He is integrally bound with the life of all created things and in everything he seeks the underlying essence, the life-pervading truth of the universe."⁴ Similarly this also appears in my lifelong interest in essential oils, homeopathy and herbal cures, which are fundamentally plants stripped down to their essence thereby revealing their amplified curative properties. The primary motivating factor for the images in my painting has always been about intuitively accessing the source of the subject matter. Working this way is indicative of an idealistic nature that strives to articulate the very essence of what it is I am focussed on. This approach to art making is grounded in the innate belief that what has been distilled and purified has great transformative power.

¹ Mandorla means 'almond shaped' in Italian. A comprehensive description will be given later in the chapter.

² Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 42.

³ Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 11.

⁴ Mookerjee, *Tantra Art: Its Philosophy and Physics*, 11.

The motifs of the mandorla, the cross, and the dot have regularly appeared in my artwork for the past fifteen to twenty years often without preconceived planning. An intuitive process based method of working, directed by the changeable nature of the materials as much as the concept, facilitates the instinctive presence of these archetypal forms. The nature or temperament of what is to emerge is there in the first instance before being birthed as a visual image. This process based method enhances serendipitous shifts and changes because of the less controllable nature of the media. Also considered are the experiences of synthesising active spiritual practices with process driven art making in an attempt to enhance the possibility of the image revealing its sacredness in the purest form. Indian philosopher Ananda K. Coomaraswamy writes about the 'aesthetic shock' that may be felt "...when the perception of a work of art becomes a serious experience."⁵ That is the experience when the spectator suddenly feels the metaphysical truth of a work of art as reflected in themselves.

The artists researched all have the shared aim of communicating aspects of their spiritual life through artwork. The ranges of approaches that they take in expressing archetypal abstract motifs through visceral embodied processes are examined. Some of the artists such as Ana Mendieta, Judy Watson and Rover Thomas have been chosen for their strong connection to the land. Others such as Sohan Qadri and Katherine Boland have been chosen as their work is directly informed by their Tantric and Buddhist practices, respectively. The work of other artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, James Turrell and Marion Borgelt has been discussed as they have strong symbolic or perceptual emphases.

As the research advanced, I developed a renewed and deeper respect for the power of intuitively expressed abstract imagery, especially embedded within a firmly grounded spiritual practice. This research aims to illustrate the power of metaphysical truth that art can reveal to the maker and the spectator.

⁵ Coomaraswamy, "Samvega: Aesthetic Shock", 193.

CHAPTER ONE

EMBODIED MEANING

This chapter is an investigation of artists who address the search for meaning through spirituality. In particular I look at artists whose motifs could be interpreted as archetypal in form. Carl Jung's theories, especially that of the collective unconscious, are central to this research. Also discussed are key writers and theorists such as the Jungian scholars Joseph Campbell and David Tacey for their contemporary reading on myth and archetype and their interest in spirituality from the Jungian perspective. George Lakoff, Mark Johnson and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are examined for their theories on the embodied mind. And Philip Rawson and Ajit Mookergee are discussed for their work on the origins of archetype in the ancient spiritual system of Tantra. A concern with the deeper underlying meaning of a spiritual nature is the common theme that has influenced this choice of literature and visual artists in this research project.

This research proposes that by creating and viewing certain distilled form and shape in an artwork one can realise a deep recognition of the divine within us. In a similar way fairy tale or myth are, in effect, recognised as archetypal symbols in the human psyche and can for that reason trigger a deep transformation in the listener.⁶ Fairy tale and myth give instruction to the psyche that is understood deep in the subconscious and eventually felt somewhere in the body. Similarly certain form and shape are archetypal and act accordingly on the psyche. I will examine embodied cognition, as it relates to this, later in the chapter in more detail.

Embodied Archetype

The archetype, as first described by Jung, is not a fixed symbol as such but rather "the instinct's perception of itself, or the self portrait of the instinct."⁷ These forms are necessarily built up, or fleshed out into image through a lived experience of the world. An example is the archetype of death/rebirth which is found in the universal human experience of sunset and sunrise, perennial growth in plants, physical death and birth. This cyclical nature of life is found mythologically in the biblical

⁶ Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 11.

⁷ Jung, *The Structure and Dynamic of the Psyche*, 136.

story of the resurrection of Jesus. It is also found as a reflection of the season's cycles in the myth of Persephone and Demeter. In the myth Persephone is taken deep underground from her mother Demeter, the Earth Goddess, by Hades, the God of the Underworld, in a classic Life/Death/Rebirth cycle. Clarissa Pinkola Estes's version of the myth includes the figure Baubo representing the wild, female sensory nature. Demeter is able, through Baubo's humour, to pull herself out of darkness and resume the search for her daughter, who is eventually rebirthed.⁸

As a result of the dependence on the lived experience to flesh out the image an archetype can take many external forms. It is interesting to note that because of the multi-layered and complex interpretations involved, an archetype is not just restricted to a single form or straightforward reading. One visual equivalent of Rebirth, that can have a powerful effect on the psyche, is the mandala with a central point.

The ultimate symbol for this state of consciousness [rebirth] is the circle, but not the circle of the beginning, which had all its power in the periphery. This circle is centred. The centre is the only important aspect of this circle, but because the self as such is invisible, we can only interpret it through circling around it.⁹

Jung was ostracised by the academic establishment of the time as his theories were seen to be too mystical and have no scientific grounding.¹⁰ This was the case even though he acknowledged Plato and others in the very early origin and concept of the archetype.¹¹ David Tacey observes that Jung's theories now seem a better counterpart for contemporary mainstream sciences whose views have tended to shift away from materialism toward one of holistic interconnectedness.¹²

Furthermore, Tacey draws on the inherent interconnectedness espoused in Jung's theories as one remedy for the world's current environmental crisis.

An ecological emergency is upon us and this has placed the function of knowledge in a different light. Knowledge which continues to fragment the world, to separate humanity from nature, to split spirit from earth and mind from body, is being viewed with a new kind of suspicion, the like of which we have not seen before. The dualistic model of knowledge, which was unrivalled until recently, is

⁸ Pinkola Estes, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*, 337.

⁹ Elbrecht, *The Transformation Journey: The Process of Guided Drawing: An Initiatic Art Therapy*, 114.

¹⁰ Smith, *Archetypes Revisited: An Updated Natural History of the Self*, 23.

¹¹ Jung, *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 4.

¹² Tacey, *The Jung Reader*, 16.

being attacked from many quarters, and Jung is coming into favour at this point in time.¹³

Subsequently, Tacey feels that we now need new models that narrow the divide between spirit/earth and mind/body. He points out that the archetype can only be fully and properly experienced through engaging with the world around us.

Archetypal images, religious and mystical systems are absolutely relative, but they are also relatively absolute, because the field of cultural ideas and expressions is the only field through which the Unknown God can be manifest and heard. When the sacred participates in the real, it steps into history and inevitably loses its absoluteness to take on the conditions of the relative.¹⁴

The archetype is directly related to the Jungian concept of the Collective Unconscious. The Collective Unconscious is a term that Carl Jung used to refer to the part of our unconscious that is made up of a collection of common archetypes that are pre-existing, cross cultural and identical in all individuals. They form the structural patterns that hold and guide all our religious and mythological concepts.¹⁵

Jung's position is that, along with the Collective Unconscious, we are also driven by the Personal Unconscious. The difference being that the personal unconscious consists mainly of individual repressed or forgotten complexes that were at some stage conscious – an amalgam of our personal experience unique to the individual.¹⁶ In my opinion this implies that a far more subjective reaction may be generated in response to an artwork that triggers the personal unconscious rather than the collective unconscious.

In chapter two I will examine archetypal form in more detail as it relates to my art making: in particular the forms of the dot, cross, and mandorla. At this point though, I would like to discuss the form of the mandorla and its use as a motif in the work of Marion Borgelt, Katherine Boland and Judy Watson.

The terms mandorla, or vesica piscis, describe the same central almond shape that geometrically appears when there is a merging of two circles. In the Italian

¹³ Tacey, *The Jung Reader*, 18.

¹⁴ Tacey, *Reenchantment: The New Australian Spirituality*, 37.

¹⁵ Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 42.

¹⁶ Ibid.

language mandorla means 'almond shaped.'¹⁷ (Fig. 1.1). Donna Wiltshire suggests that the merging of circles is a deeply feminine structure, which affirms my own intuitive reading of it.¹⁸ The shape, also suggesting a female vulva and its connection to goddess worship, can be traced back through history. There have been discoveries of mandorla shaped rock incisions dating back to 30,000-25,000 BC (Fig. 1.2).

The very oldest of all known depictions of the Goddess or the specifically female powers of women are the rock-incised triangles and other depictions of the Yoni found in many of the now French caves such as La Ferrassie, Abri Blanchard, Castanet, Cellier, Laussel, Poisson, Les Rois, and others.¹⁹

In Christian iconography the mandorla, represented as a full body halo around a chosen subject, signifies radiance and divinity.²⁰ (Fig. 1.3). It is the earthly and the heavenly realms brought into union. The mandorla is a representation of a liminal realm that balances the two principals of light/dark, masculine/feminine, the "eternal and the ephemeral."²¹ This liminal realm is a naturally active and creative space as its joining of polarities suggests creating something greater than the sum of its parts. In his book *Owning Your Own Shadow*, Jungian analyst and author Robert Johnson speaks about the universality of balancing the opposing parts of our psyche. As humans we allow others to see the acceptable parts of our personalities but relegate the less acceptable parts to our shadow selves. The mandorla is symbolic of the overlap of opposites.²²

The mandorla has a wonderfully healing and encouraging function. When one is tired or discouraged or so battered by life that one can no longer live in the tension of the opposites, the mandorla shows what one may do. ...The mandorla begins the healing of the split. The overlap generally is very tiny at first, only a sliver of a new moon; but it is a beginning. As time passes, the greater the overlap, the greater and more complete is the healing. The mandorla binds together that which was torn apart and made unwhole-unholy. It is the most profound religious experience we can have.²³

¹⁷ Wilson, "Pythagoras and the Mystery of Numbers", University of Georgia, 2013.
<http://jwilson.coe.uga.edu/EMAT6680Fa06/Hobgood/Pythagoras.html>

¹⁸ Wiltshire, *Virgin, Mother, Crone: Myths and Mysteries of the Triple Goddess*, 222.

¹⁹ Camphausen, *The Yoni: Sacred Symbol of Female Creative Power*, 10-11.

²⁰ Stevens, *Ariadne's Clue: A guide to the Symbols of Humankind*, 187.

²¹ Lawlor, *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice*, 32.

²² Johnson, *Owning Your Own Shadow*, 98.

²³ Ibid., 102-103.

The work of Australian artist Marion Borgelt is rich with symbolic form. She has developed a visual vocabulary of forms that evoke associations with multifarious sources of meaning. Borgelt studied painting and drawing in New York in the late 1970s attending lectures by Christo, John Cage, Leo Steinberg and Dore Ashton. Learning the value of the expressive power of the symbol was a consequence of researching the writings of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.²⁴ Borgelt's use of spirals, ellipses and spheres evokes a collective cellular memory that at the same time is a metaphor for various psychological and emotional states.²⁵ In her 'Void' series of works transparent shapes akin to the mandorla break through the surface to reveal access to underlying form that seems to rotate in the opposite direction (Fig. 1.4). Borgelt comments about the painting 'Void Series: Equilibrium' 1994 which was completed whilst she was living in Paris: (Fig. 1.5)

This piece was painted out of a feeling of being in transition – of moving from one space to another, of moving from one culture to another, of moving from one dimension to another. It is about finding a balance and relationship between two disparate cultures. In superimposing two spatial planes like this, I am suggesting the feeling of being spun around on your axis...In this work there is a sense of entering the void within the void. I think there are spaces inside spaces; knowledge within knowledge.²⁶

The mandorla, in its archetypal meaning, would seem to provide respite and balance to opposing parts of the psyche. The time spent in Paris also served as a catalyst for Borgelt for the realisation that symbols and symbolic language held great significance and potential for her work.

As a result of the profound interest the French have in language, I have started to engage with ideas of symbols and signs of languages ... Patterns, designs, emblems, symbols and motifs have been used since time immemorial to carry messages and meanings before written language, which may have evolved from collectively understood symbols.²⁷

The artist Katherine Boland, who arrived in Australia from the UK in 1961 as a small child, uses the mandorla form in her art work referring to them as shields.²⁸ She has named a recent body of work 'Shield, Me', (Fig. 1.6).

²⁴ Geissler, "Marion Borgelt," 32.

²⁵ Lynn, *Marion Borgelt*, 8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁷ Geissler, "Marion Borgelt," 33.

²⁸ Boland, "Shields", www.katherineboland.com

Katherine Boland, a Buddhist, expounded on the body of work saying:

... I have used black and white as an emotionally and spiritually charged backdrop on which to superimpose 'shields'. The urge to create shields may have sprung unconsciously from a desire to protect myself after a tumultuous relationship or from the perilous state of humanity and the planet. The shields also represent individual entities, each having unique characteristics, but, like the human race itself, a shared commonality ...On viewing these works we can perceive negative and positive spaces interchanging. Are we seeing an object, in the space before us, or an opening into another world? In Eastern philosophy these ancient contemplations give insights into the nature of reality.²⁹

By the use of black and white and interchanging positive and negative spaces there is recognition of polarities, and from Boland's writing an urge to reconcile aspects of the 'other' whether it is in relationships or humanity in general. The body of work 'Part of Nature' was shown in a cross cultural exhibition held at the University of La Verne Harris Art Gallery in Los Angeles in 2011. The following year the exhibition, called 'Covering Ground', toured back to Melbourne and was exhibited at the Dark Horse Experiment in the city (Fig. 1.7). Phe Luxford refers to the works as:

...appear[ing] to possess clear character and purpose as they stand upright within the blackened background. Inky rivers of varnish drip from their centres like sap weeping from a wound. Perhaps these glistening centres represent a void, a cracking open, and outpouring of new potential life.³⁰

It seems to me that whilst acknowledging the title of the series and referring to the works as possible leaves or seed husks, Luxford still feels the deeper archetypal analogies in the forms by describing them as a void that cracks open to allow the outpouring of new life.

There is recurring thematic imagery in the work of contemporary Indigenous Australian artist Judy Watson. An obvious mandorla shape is seen in the 2002 painting *two halves with bailer shell* (Fig. 1.8), showing two forms; one filled with concentric circles, the other an empty space. Although other motifs in Watson's work could outwardly be described as more triangular rather than mandorla shaped the form of the downward pointing triangle is widely recognised as a

²⁹ Boland, "Part of Nature", www.katherineboland.com

³⁰ Luxford, "Gleaning Nature". Catalogue essay for *Covering Ground*, 8.

distilled representation of the feminine.³¹ This, in my view, is its association with the mandorla in Watson's work.

Lawn Hill Gorge in north-west Queensland was the birth place of Watson's grandmother and great-grandmother and has held importance to Watson as a sense of place that anchors her matrilineal ancestral and historical memory.³² The power of place for Indigenous Australians is inherently linked with the ancestral history of the past and its current people.

A site is a place. The power that created the world is located here, and when a person walks to this place, they put their body in the locus of creation. The beings who made and make the world have left something here – their body, their power, their consciousness, their Law. To stand here is to be *known by* that power.³³

Traditionally the use of symbol and artistic devices such as the rarrk (crosshatching), and the dot carry encoded information specific to region.³⁴ These act as a visual conduit allowing the artist to 'see' the transcendent reality around them.³⁵ Judy Watson has built up a personal language of aesthetic devices that, when committed to paper or canvas, allow access to concealed histories that are normally intangible.³⁶

Embodied Cognition

The term 'embodiment' distinguishes between meaning that is understood through the body as a lived experience, and meaning that is merely conceptual in nature.³⁷ Maurice Merleau-Ponty's account of the term embodiment is one that distinguishes between the body as a physiological form and the body as a phenomenal being that subjectively experiences the world as 'I'. Humans have an instinctive body based knowledge that does not depend on understanding the physiological processes of certain actions. For example if we are bitten by a mosquito we do not need to think about how we scratch the itch. The action isn't performed by our objective body, but our phenomenal body.³⁸ We feel with our

³¹ Camphausen, *The Yoni*, 29.

³² McKenzie, *Contemporary Australian Drawing #1*, 202.

³³ Bird Rose, "The Power of Place," 40.

³⁴ Perkins, "One Sun One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia," 12.

³⁵ Turner, "Images of Transcendence: The Art of Warnindilyakwa," 114.

³⁶ Watson, "Judy Watson: In Conversation," 304.

³⁷ Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 121.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 121.

bodies in the first instance what Gilles Deleuze understands as felt signals rather than signals that are "...known or perceived through cognition." He argues that the feeling then becomes the catalyst for inquiry.³⁹

Lakoff and Johnson argue that embodied concepts form neural structures that make use of sensorimotor systems of our brains, and further, that these concepts play out in our lives via metaphor.⁴⁰ Although there are many bases for metaphor, they are essentially experiential.⁴¹ An example is seen in our concept of intimacy and warmth developed in infancy by the constant reinforcement of being held. Neural connections were being made that correlated the sensory experience of warmth with being held. Later in life we speak metaphorically of 'a warm smile' or 'a close friend'.⁴² In terms of symbol, according to Merleau-Ponty, it is not the end result, the symbol (or metaphor) that is the irreducible law that directs the psyche; rather it is the experiences that went in to make up the symbol. "The Gestalt of a circle is not its mathematical law but its physiognomy."⁴³ This would confirm Jung's analysis that the archetype is fleshed out by the lived experience.

The role of ritual and its important synergy with archetype and symbol is highlighted by American scholar of religious and ritual studies, Catherine Bell. She distinguishes between ritual as action, and symbol as concept or thought. The ritual, performed with the body, acts to integrate a belief or concept, and the end symbol is essentially an integrated outcome of a process of ritual, or action. To quote Bell: "...beliefs, creeds, symbols and myths emerge as forms of mental content or conceptual blueprints: they direct, inspire, or promote activity, but they themselves are not activities."⁴⁴

Archetypal form, therefore, is a result of certain beliefs and thought channeled through the body, via ritual (or everyday repeated experience). It is a crystallized outcome of embodied cognition. Chapter two discusses the role that ritual has in my work.

³⁹ Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 7.

⁴⁰ Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, 20.

⁴¹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 18.

⁴² Lakoff and Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh*, 46.

⁴³ Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 70.

⁴⁴ Bell, *Ritual Theory Ritual Practice*, 19-20.

According to Levy-Bruhl and his notion of *participation mystique* the listener/viewer becomes so bonded with the object or story that, Jung maintains, it is difficult to distinguish it as separate from themselves.⁴⁵ In fact anthropologist Jojada Verrips considers that there is a key connection between spirituality and sensory based logic. He believes that the dominant mode of expressing and responding to spirituality is through the body rather than the logical mind.

...believers carry the holy and the sacred all the time with them in a particular corporeal format. It is both outside and inside their bodies. It is a kind of corporeal yardstick each and every religious subject uses to measure everything he or she is touched by through the senses.⁴⁶

Verrips further remarks that this is one of the reasons why art, showing religious imagery involving deviations from the norm, generally draws such a negative response from the public. They feel what they perceive is an 'insult' as a bodily attack.⁴⁷

Embodied Immanence

The notion of organizing thought through the body is not new. Tantra is an ancient study that directs the pupil through practical ways to enlightenment. It equates the human body with the cosmos and, as such, promotes body based practices, including sexual practices, to achieve enlightenment.⁴⁸ The earliest complete tantric texts date to about 600 AD.⁴⁹ Central to the teachings is that reality is an indivisible whole and that all manifestation is based on a male principal known as Cosmic Consciousness, or Siva, and a female principal known as Cosmic Force of Nature, or Sakti: thought and action.⁵⁰ Even though the central tenet of Tantra is a non-dualistic unity our actual human experience is often one of separation. Therefore the ultimate goal of Tantra is to achieve a reconciliation of these polarities through active contemplation and practices.⁵¹ Mircea Eliade explains that in fact almost all religions through history have, as their primary goal, a drive to

⁴⁵ Jung, *The Spirit in Man Art and Literature*, 105.

⁴⁶ Verrips, "Offending Art and the Sense of Touch," 217.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 218.

⁴⁸ Rawson, *The Art of Tantra*, 10.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 17.

⁵⁰ Also seen as Shiva and Shakti.

⁵¹ Mookerjee and Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, 15-16.

“abolish dualisms, endless returnings and fragmentary existences.”⁵² It is a desire to become whole. Some early Tantric ritual art is quite abstract and primordial in its form. Silpi-Yogini’s, ritual artists, create the art through a process of ritual not to represent a personal creativity but to manifest a universal “order that already exists (sarvam), of which they are a part, and so represent it to the world.”⁵³ (Figs. 1.9, 1.10).

One could question the validity of the notion that certain artwork has the capacity to transform or ‘heal’ the viewer, given its intensely subjective dialogue. In dissecting what it is about the image that ‘does’ the transforming, I would argue that it is not so much about a positive, blissful emotion that may be engendered, but more about emotion itself, either positive or negative.

For the three artists discussed below an emphasis on the perceptual qualities of their artwork is important. The viewer absorbs meaning in an embodied sense rather than a purely cerebral fashion.

Cuban-born performance artist Ana Mendieta (1948-1985) explored the relationship between her body and the indexical nature of the imprint it left, often on the earth. Susan Best argues that the work of Mendieta has an emotional ambivalence. That which can, on the one hand, be felt as a “...blissful union with the world” can also be felt as “...restriction, suffocation and confinement...”⁵⁴ Her ‘Silueta’ series (1973-1980), where she created female silhouettes in nature, often using her own body, are good examples of this (Fig. 1.11). A viewer may either have an intensely profound experience looking at the images or equally feel confined, restricted or suffocated. If this were to be cast through the Jungian lens the profound experience of primal remembrance of earth connection would be generated from the collective unconscious, while any individual positive or negative emotions would be generated from the personal unconscious. Therefore in my view, the transformational affect is possible through the embodied emotion of a primal remembrance of archetypal connection to the earth, regardless of the

⁵² Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, 185.

⁵³ Mookerjee, *Ritual Art of India*, 23.

⁵⁴ Best, *Visualising Feeling*, 104-105.

actual positive or negative emotions that the embodied remembrance may bring up.

Referencing Wassily Kandinsky's 1911 book *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* Virginia Spate in her essay "'Concerning the Spiritual in Art': A Sceptical Essay", questions whether the spectator can share the artist's expression of spirituality if they do not also have a concurrent belief in the spirituality of what is being expressed.⁵⁵ Do the spectator's and the artist's belief systems need to be aligned to gain insight with what is being expressed? And if the two belief systems are not aligned does that preclude deep understanding and connection? She also questions whether any connection that is made between the artwork and the spectator is merely transitory or can it actually have a lasting effect.⁵⁶ In my attempt to answer those questions I refer to the previous discussion of the archetype. This would indicate a universal cognizance and therefore a possibility that a deep and lasting connection can be made. For both questions though the subjective views of the perceiver do become part of the dynamic interplay. Spate relates the experience of standing in front of Kandinsky's 1926 work '*Several Circles*' (Fig. 1.12). Despite the intellectual understanding of the compositional devices in action she felt a perceptual shift "into another order of consciousness."⁵⁷ This suggests a deeper connection rather than merely the logical cause and effect of good composition. Wassily Kandinsky's premise was that all art is, in essence, abstract. And that every phenomenon has two aspects – the external (how it is seen) and the internal (how it is felt). Kandinsky was striving for a depiction of the internal or the invisible in his abstract paintings, and having an effect on the inner life of those that viewed them.⁵⁸

I agree with Spate when she says that it is not the literal meaning of a symbol in an artwork that holds the power, rather, meaning is found in the perceptual experience of the artwork.⁵⁹ When, through contemplation of the image, the viewer is taken to a place of 'emptiness', for example, it is possible to 'observe the observer' – to experience the self as pure consciousness.

⁵⁵ Spate, "'Concerning the Spiritual in Art': A Sceptical Essay," 76.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 77.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 78.

⁵⁸ Henry, *Seeing the Invisible: On Kandinsky*, 6.

⁵⁹ Spate, "'Concerning the Spiritual in Art': A Sceptical Essay," 78.

Across all cultures humans have made and gravitated toward places of worship. They will often be places that are set aside from normal day to day activities so the individual has to make a conscious decision to enter the space. They will frequently be built according to some form of sacred geometry, or at the very least have a strong sense of symmetry. Light, colour, acoustics and other sensory effects are also taken into account.

Esther Sternberg, currently Professor of Medicine and Research Director at the Arizona Centre for Integrative Medicine, University of Arizona, studies the mind-body interaction in illness and healing, and has a special interest in the nexus between the mind-body and the environment. She has found that there is a part of the brain that is dense with endorphin receptors that becomes very active when looking at a scene that is universally preferred. For example when looking at scenes of nature as opposed to urban scenes this part of the brain releases endorphins which make us feel good.⁶⁰ If applied to places such as health care facilities in the form of gardens or windows looking out into nature she found that patients heal faster.

James Turrell is a contemporary American artist who uses the effects of natural and artificial light in spaces to generate immersive experiences. By precise planning he creates environments that have the ability to acutely engage and activate the viewer's sensory perception. 'Bindu Shards' 2010 is a 4.2 meter spherical form in which the viewer is wheeled in, horizontally.⁶¹ (Fig. 1.13). Only one person at a time may enter. The viewer then experiences fifteen minutes of immersion in coloured lights, with any outside noise blocked by earphones. Generally the most familiar means of engaging with an art work is moving toward or around it in an upright fashion, in a large well lit space. In this case the kinaesthetic sense is immobilized – by being wheeled in, and the aural sense is altered – by being in a small spherical space with earphones, in isolation. Additionally the optic sense is altered by being exposed to coloured light. Under these circumstances human perception can be distorted quite considerably. Turrell is exploiting a phenomenon of visual perception, called the Ganzfeld Effect that

⁶⁰ Sternberg, *Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Wellbeing*, 33.

⁶¹ Turrell, "Bindu Shards," 2013, <http://jamesturrell.com/artwork/bindu-shards/>

occurs when the brain is starved of any sensory input. In a homogenous visual field the brain either temporarily shuts off all visual sensation resulting in apparent blindness or it compensates leading to hallucinations and altered states of mind. Hallucinatory occurrences have been noted by aeroplane pilots flying through dense fog or skiers who are subject to an environment of uniform colour and brightness.⁶²

‘Bindu Shards’ enhances the possibility of the viewer undergoing a transformational experience in the same way a meditating monk develops practices to achieve enlightenment. The meditator has purposefully altered incoming sensory information by sitting in a certain position, in a quiet space, and (depending on the variant of meditation practice) will coordinate the body, the breath and the mind with various exercises. The title of the installation, ‘Bindu Shards’, I believe, alludes to the spiritual aspect of the piece (or the aspect of potential spiritual transformation of the viewer, or in this case, the one who experiences). The bindu is a Sanskrit word for dot, or point: “The convergence point from which everything, as yet unmanifest arises.”⁶³

The title infers that Turrell has created a space that may offer one method of facilitating access to enlightenment. Offering a view into what an enlightenment experience may feel like is significant as it gives a point of reference for which to strive.

In her book *Metonymy in Contemporary Art: A New Paradigm* Denise Green argues for the acceptance of the importance of metonymic thought in understanding and critiquing art. She says that the intrinsic nature of Western culture, which has tended to evolve in a linear historical fashion, has precluded the metonymic mode of thinking.⁶⁴ In the past, the writings of Clement Greenberg have cemented this vision in art criticism by suggesting that art – and particularly abstraction – should rely purely on its formalist values – either in form and colour, or its material qualities rather than relying on any intended meaning in the work.⁶⁵ “Metonymic thinking implies the fusion of the inner spiritual and the outer material

⁶² Zakia, *Perception and Imaging*, 2.

⁶³ Sr Nivedita Chaitanya, Hindu nun, conversation with author, April 2012.

⁶⁴ Green, *Metonymy in Contemporary Art: A New Paradigm*, 18.

⁶⁵ Greenberg, “Towards a Newer Laocoon,” 34.

world. When artists create metonymically, the outward aspects of the art work are seamlessly connected with the inner state of the artist...”⁶⁶ Earlier I clarified my aim to use archetypal form as a way to connect with the spectator. That certain archetypal form is recognised because of its inherent human universality. On the one hand my explanation about archetypal shapes sourced from the collective unconscious has a purely formalist Greenberg-ian ring to it – in that, “if an artist renders a particular shape it follows that it will have a particular effect on the spectator”, because of the inherent meaning in the form. The clinical nature of this reasoning is countered, for me, through the materiality of the paint. I still maintain that there is power in the archetypal form but by ‘transpersonalising’ it, by manipulating the material, the artist passes it through the lens of their humanity and it becomes a more powerful image. It is infused with sacredness, and like Denise Green, I believe work that has been metonymically infused with myth and ritual is a considerably more potent image.

⁶⁶ Green, *Metonymy in Contemporary Art: A New Paradigm*, 20.

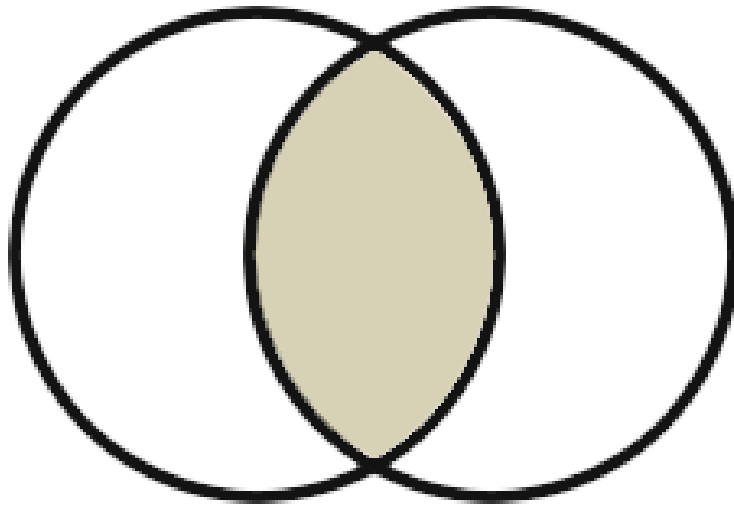


Figure 1.1. Mandorla: Central almond shape created by the merging of two circles.



Figure 1.2. Rock incision, 30,000 BC, La Ferrassie, France.

<http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/christ-in-majesty-with-symbols-of-the-four-evangelists-31898>

Figure 1.3. Unidentified artist, Spanish (Catalan), *Christ in Majesty with Symbols of the Four Evangelists*, 12th century, fresco secco transferred to plaster and wood, 645 x 382 x 282 cm.

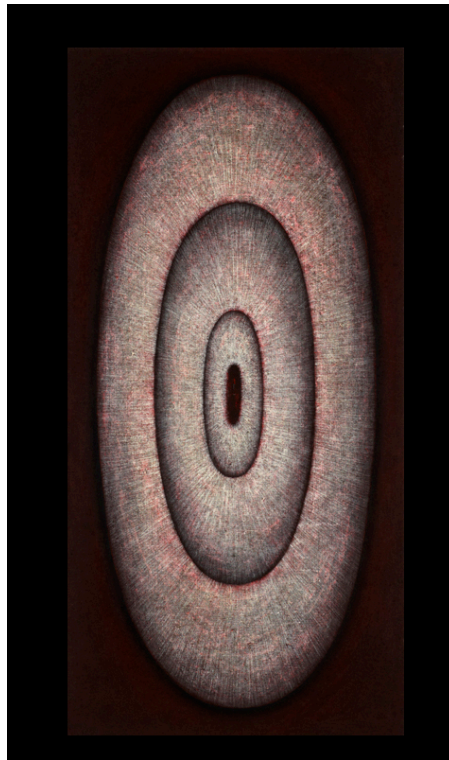


Figure 1.4. Marion Borgelt, *Void Series: XV*, 1993, pigment on jute.



Figure 1.5. Marion Borgelt, *Void Series: Equilibrium*, 1994-97, pigment on jute, 236 x 107 cm.

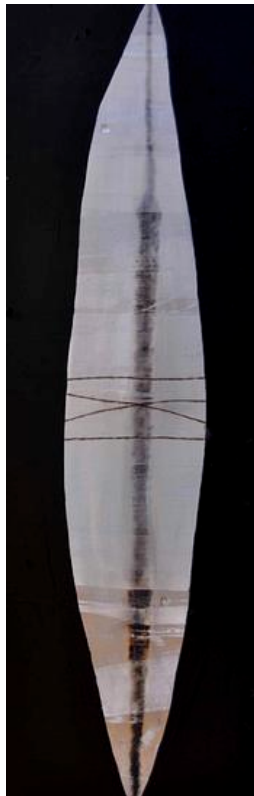


Figure 1.6. Katherine Boland, *Grey Shield*, 2012, enamel, scorch marks, liming solution on timber, 120 x 40 cm.



Figure 1.7. Katherine Boland, *Part of Nature #3*, 2011, enamel, liming solution, wood stain, scorch marks on inscribed timber, 120 x 120 cm.



Figure 1.8. Judy Watson, *two halves with bailer shell*, 2002, pigment and acrylic on canvas, 194 x 108 cm.

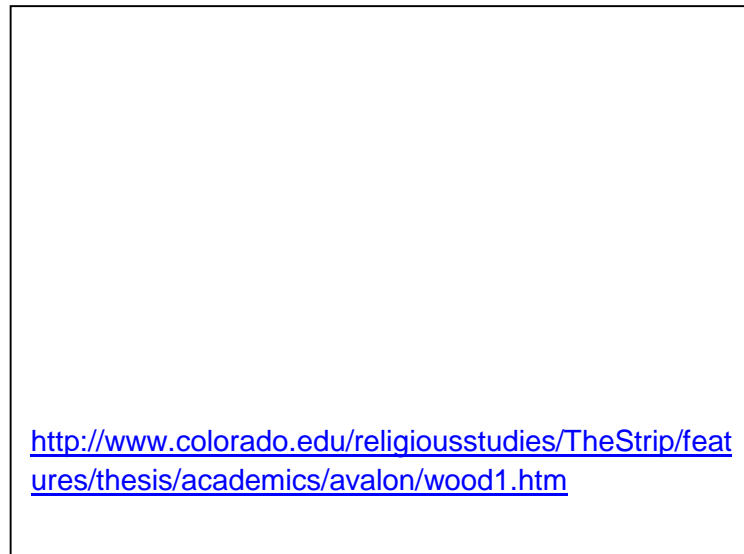


Figure 1.9. The fertilized world egg, dividing into regions and currents of energy, 18th century, Rajasthan, gouache on paper, 28 x 43 cm.

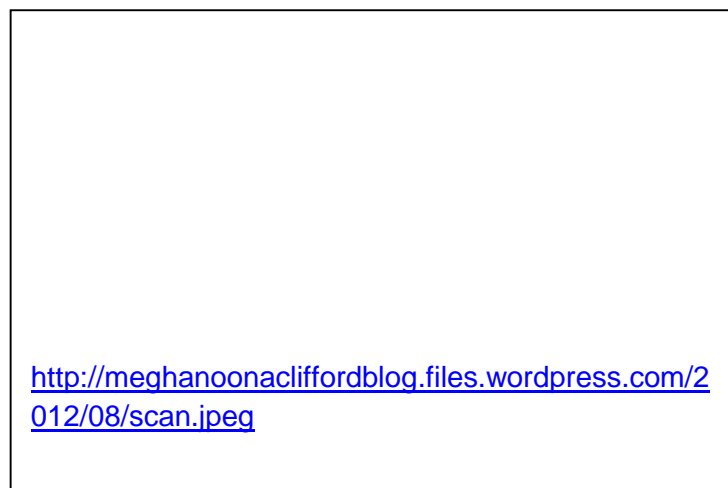


Figure 1.10. *Pure Consciousness: The Metacosmic Void*, 18th century, Rajasthan, gouache on paper.



Figure 1.11. Ana Mendieta, *Silueta Series*, Mexico, 1973-78, c-print, 51 x 33 cm

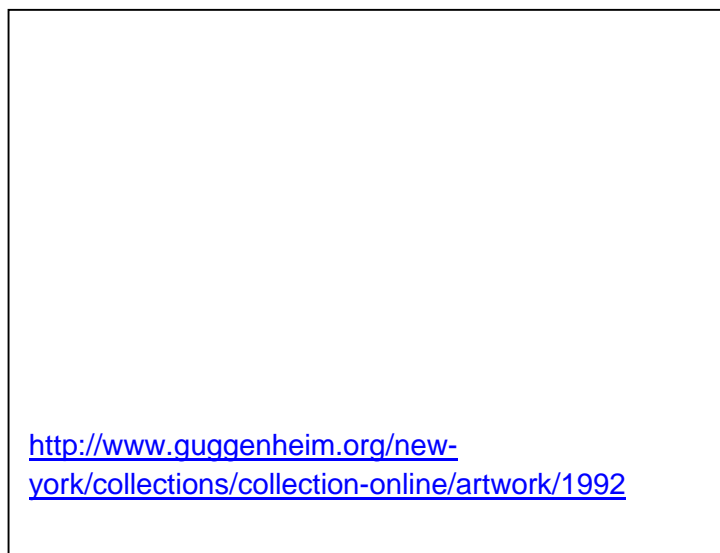


Figure 1.12. Wassily Kandinsky, *Several Circles*, 1926, oil on canvas, 140.3 x 140.7 cm.

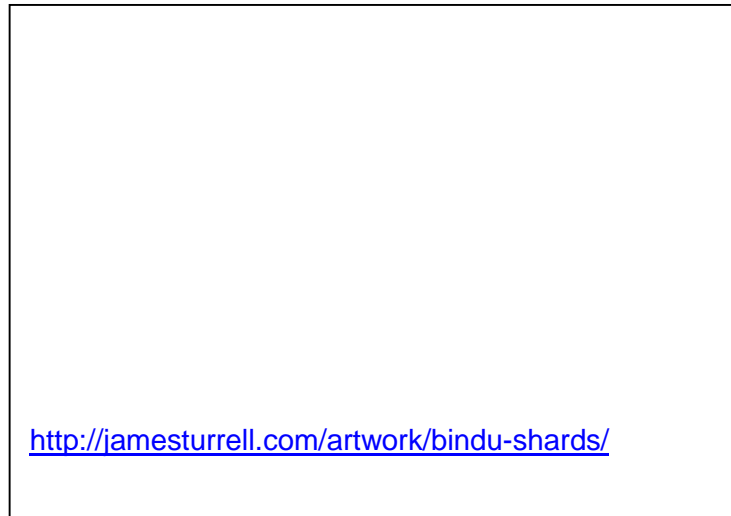


Figure 1.13. James Turrell, *Bindu Shards*, 2010, enclosed sphere, rolling bed.

CHAPTER TWO

‘A RECOMPOSED NEUTRALITY OF BEING’.

This chapter is dedicated to an explanation of the methods used in this research project and the artists that have influenced my work. The common link between these artists is a strong spirituality that is expressed through their art work. The artists that I have investigated are Judy Watson, Sohan Qadri, Katherine Boland, and Rover Thomas. I also examine in more detail the archetypal forms of the dot, cross and the mandorla and how and in what form they appear in my artwork.

Suppose one's body could be traced back through a succession of geometric solids, as rare and pure as crystalline structures, taking form from the pressure of recalled external forces ... the incubator, laundry-box, font, pram, boat, shoe, wigwam, bed, piano, desk, horse, temple, high school, door ... and if geometry is an expression of eternal and exact truths, inherent in the natural law of matter and thus manifestations of an absolute beauty, pre-destined, of divine origin ... then let this model of mathematical harmony be infused with a poetry of feeling and memory to sublimate the discord of past passion and desire in a recomposed neutrality of being.⁶⁷

In the excerpt above the British artist Helen Chadwick proposes that if all our past physical and emotional experiences leave an indelible impression on our bodies, then by infusing this very personal and subjective experience of memory and feeling with the (sometimes formal and impersonal) notion of a divine origin, then we arrive at a ‘recomposed neutrality of being’. This identifies the importance and the need for spiritual concepts to be digested in an embodied manner before they can be truly understood. A ‘recomposed neutrality of being’ recognizes the ability for an art work to become metonymically infused with a sacred divinity that can then impart its embodied knowledge to the spectator.

I am often compulsively drawn to use repeating dots, lines, and pattern in art work. Sometimes the repeating patterns form an intrinsic part of the work from the very beginning, but sometimes they are overlayed onto an existing substructure. Invariably, they are about taking any literal or purely symbolic meaning that exists in the work and either merging or layering it with a personal spiritual significance.

⁶⁷ Chadwick, In *Enfleshings: Helen Chadwick*, 9.

Looking back, my most successful work has been when I have, what I call, 'transpersonalised' the work in this way. The word transpersonal is defined as: "...experiences in which the sense of identity or self extends beyond (trans) the individual or personal to encompass wider aspects of humankind, life, psyche or cosmos."⁶⁸ So in effect, an image of everyday reality is taken and passed through a psychic lens coloured by all my past emotional experiences.

For instance, in the past I spent a lot of time painting out in the landscape. The work was always more satisfying when it was taken back to the studio and worked over with washes of pure or iridescent colour, layers of pattern that moved in and out of the optical field, or calligraphic mark making. These patterns, washes and mark making were an indexical manifestation of inner states of being, rather than a didactic symbolic language. This current work dispenses with the need to focus on the vehicle of a fixed subject matter but rather centres on using intuitive mark making driven by the innate senses of the physical body.

Within this research project I choose to work on paper with liquid media as it has a quality which feels unlaboured in application. It flows in a very organic way that embraces serendipitous gesture in the mark making. Water based media such as inks and water colour, when applied to damp paper, move freely without having to push them around or to dictate to them too much. By nature, water based mediums are potentially very active, and likewise wet paper. It feels like an alchemical reaction is triggered by two materials being brought together. The end result is something that is potentially much more than the sum of its parts. In particular I appreciate this potential in the reactive qualities of the spirit based ink. Being heavily pigmented it absorbs deeply into the damp rag paper, sometimes through to the back. Depending on how saturated with water the paper is and how much ink is applied the excess ink, being spirit based and not able to be fully dissolved in water, will 'shatter' off leaving pale crystalline-like forms swimming on the surface of the puddle of water. As the water dries the crystalline forms settle in permanently to the surface of the paper. It makes sense that I would gravitate toward using liquid media on paper as its action, as just described, could also be applied to the meaning of the form of the mandorla. That is, a liminal, highly active

⁶⁸ Walsh and Vaughan, "On Transpersonal Definitions," 203.

and creative space that is brought about by the union of polarities. It is also the principal of Tantra – the union of two disparate parts that transcends polarities and creates something new.⁶⁹

Dot

This current research is a confirmation of the universality of intuitive mark making. For example, to express a feeling of oneness and expansiveness I will intuitively use dots or multiple small marks. Dots are my language to express connection to the cosmos. It has been my experience through studying art therapy that it is the motif that others use as well to express the same thing. In relation to Tantric studies the single dot, or the Bindu, is known as the seed or creative origin of all:

The transcendental state of consciousness is marked by a sense of the Void, cosmic spacelessness. Rituals lead ultimately to concentration on the point (the Bindu), the centre at which all experience, all being, is compacted into its utmost concentration – to implode back into its origin.⁷⁰

Partha Mitter, Emeritus Professor of History of Art at the University of Sussex speaks about one dot inferring multiple dots: “The supreme Dot gives rise to minute dots signifying transcendence and immanence...”⁷¹ When I use repetitive dots it feels like a meditative practice (Fig. 2.1). In the repetitive application of dots I have a sense that my physical body and psyche are somehow realigning with some common higher purpose. And that common purpose is achieved through intuitively assessing, reassessing, and adjusting the size and placement of the dots. Each subsequent dot is guided by the placement of the previous with slight built in adjustments. This is an analogous aspect of my spiritual life. A decision was made many years ago to remain aware of the effects of my beliefs and thought processes and how they played out in my life, and to adjust them as needed.

Indian born Sohan Qadri (1932 - 2011) was an artist, poet and Tantric teacher, of the Vajrayana Tantric Buddhist tradition, who spent almost the last 40 years of his

⁶⁹ Mookergee and Khanna, *The Tantric Way*, 15-16.

⁷⁰ Mookergee, *The Ritual Art of India*, 14.

⁷¹ Mitter, “Per Adua ad Astra: Sohan Qadri’s Life and Work,” 18.

life living in Denmark.⁷² His work was deeply informed by his spiritual life and he sought to make images that disarmed the intellect and, as in meditation, to quieten the thought processes enough of the viewer to be imbibed in deep silence.⁷³ He worked on paper with ink and dye as he felt that medium was best suited for his work that evolved from this meditative state. He said that: "When I work in ink and dyes, I don't have to fight with the canvas. There are no brush strokes, no painter. The aura of the form is the painting."⁷⁴

The dot was a vital aspect to Qadri's art work as it was to his spiritual life. The dot appears in most of Qadri's work in some form. In his 2008 work *Ananda XII*, (Fig. 2.2), the motif of the bindu is shown as multiple perforations through the paper. Donald Kuspit recognises the symbolism of the void/seed motif. "...the fact that the punctures are simultaneously voids and seeds. They assert their presence through their absence: the dot is non-being as being."⁷⁵

The view of the dot as a cross cultural archetypal form takes on special significance when explored in Indigenous art. The writer and artist Barb Bolt illustrates the performativity of Indigenous painting by stating that for Australian Indigenous artists there is a "...causal or indexical link between the landscape, the body and their paintings."⁷⁶ She quotes Julie Dowling who she interviewed in 1997:

Each step means there's another step to go on and this part of the country is this part of the picture so that as you are acting out the dot, dot, dot, dot, dot; even the action in itself is quite rhythmical, but when you bring that into connection with the heartbeat and also I'm telling a story now; this dot connects with this dot; this story is about this... the whole connection with the land comes from the process up.⁷⁷

Other motifs employed by Indigenous artists such as the line and circle can equally be interpreted as an indexical link between land and body. The anthropologist, Nancy D. Munn, says:

....a well-known aspect of Aboriginal practices allows ancient topographical features to be detached from fixed locations and reproduced in iconographic designs, which

⁷² Mitter, "Per Adua ad Astra: Sohan Qadri's Life and Work," 16.

⁷³ Tagore, "The Seer: Origins and Influences," 132.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 133.

⁷⁵ Kuspit, "Meditation, Aesthetic Shock, and The Gladdening of Consciousness," 14.

⁷⁶ Bolt, "Painting is Not a Representational Practice," 52-53.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 53.

can then be mobilised for varying time spans as aspects of persons, objects, or other spaces. Thus topographies (in their iconographic form) can be transposed into actors' bodies (through painting) and onto different terrestrial spaces (and in ground paintings or drawings).⁷⁸

Cross

The cross formation employed by Rover Thomas in the 1987 painting *Roads meeting*, to me, exemplifies the ability for an art work to become metonymically infused with a sacred divinity that can then impart its embodied knowledge to the spectator (Fig. 2.3). Tina Baum explains that in this painting one track signifies that of the ancestral beings of the land, and the other track that of the white settlers, with the centre a symbol of reconciliation.⁷⁹

The cross is pattern that appears in my work, either as a repetitive underlying foundation or as a singular motif. Traditional Christian meaning aside, I have come to see the cross formation as a union of opposites in that it is the crossing of verticals and horizontals. The physical crossing point of the vertical and horizontal infers the dot again, referring to the highly charged and creative area at the centre of the two opposites (Figs. 2.4, 2.5). In Thomas' painting the meaning of this (albeit diagonal) crossing of tracks is clear. It is what Tina Baum calls "...an analogy for the coming together of two cultures in Australia."⁸⁰

Mandorla

The form of the mandorla has been making a regular appearance in my artwork for the past fifteen years or so. The process of working intuitively has allowed the shape to appear but for a long time the broader historical origins of it were unknown to me. It was enough to see and feel its appearance without it being tainted with a fixed intellectual knowledge. It felt like it was going to a deeply female place in my psyche. In fact the mandorla and my urge to discover more about it was the pivotal reason I embarked on this research project. Since researching the shape it has affirmed my intuitive feeling of it as a deeply feminine archetypal structure that has its roots in many cultures across millennia, as

⁷⁸ Munn, "Excluded Spaces: The Figure in the Australian Aboriginal Landscape," 463.

⁷⁹ Baum, "Rover Thomas [Joolama]." National Gallery of Australia, 2010.

<http://artsearch.nga.gov.au/Detail.cfm?IRN=77119>

⁸⁰ Ibid.

discussed earlier, and that it is symbolically connected to concepts of profound transformation. I was curious that Katherine Boland described her body of work, which utilised the mandorla, as shields. I had never perceived them as shields. Through an email discussion, I asked what she felt when making the shield shapes. Theoretically if the shape is part of the collective unconscious then even when titled 'shields' they will still be felt as very healing forms on some level - or at least felt as liminal spaces before action or renewal. I also asked Katherine if she had any previous intellectual understanding of the mandorla shape. She replied that it was:

Definitely intuitive. I paint without analysing too much. I find it gets in the way. I felt compelled to paint these shapes and it was only afterwards that I started to think about whys and wherefores. I think they had something to do with walking out on my marriage of 30 years. ... Maybe I was trying to reassert my female power! ... I am tending to want to dispense with anything extraneous and get to the 'essence'. So my work is becoming even more Minimalistic. I think it's a natural progression.⁸¹

Interestingly, when making the mandorla shape I sense the joining of some split within me. It feels like a very positive and healing expression. Some of my artwork with the mandorla shape also involves the use of dark and light form in juxtaposition (Fig. 2.6). A tension between the light/dark, positive/negative is resolved, or brought into union, through the form of the mandorla. There is a sense of cognitive dissonance or disequilibrium that has resolution within the mandorla when the two separate circular entities unite.

Related to the mandorla, through its meaning as a symbol of the feminine principle, is the downward pointing triangle. Rufus Camphausen observes that the triangle is incorporated into many religious paintings and esoteric diagrams as a representation of the power of the feminine.⁸² On contemplating the long, narrow, downward pointing, triangular shape that is repeated in the larger works, I have come to realise that this is a distilled signifier of my physical body (Fig. 2.7, 2.8). I realised this whilst at a family reunion. It was a hot day and with a very full stomach I let my conscious mind drift as I settled into a deck chair and vaguely tuned in to the family members around me. Squinting into the sun I suddenly

⁸¹ Katherine Boland, email message to author, April 9, 2013.

⁸² Camphausen, *The Yoni: Sacred Symbol of Female Creative Power*, 29.

realised that our familial similarity in physique could be condensed down to a long downward pointing triangular shape. I could then ‘see’ this shape superimposed over most of us. In the physical sense in my family it translates to a more or less squarer, broader upper body with thinner, finer extremities. The same shape can be seen in the work of Judy Watson. I was of course familiar with her work in the past but had not, until last year, looked at it in depth in relation to this research project. I was surprised and somewhat shocked to find that I was using very similar motifs and mark making to Watson. I was relieved not to have recognised them in her work earlier as my developing visual language would have felt stifled for fear of ‘plagiarism’. In fact it acted as a very positive and confirming find and echoed my intuitive knowledge of those forms. Upon reading more of Watson’s journey I realised that the downward pointing triangle shape meant for Watson a similar thing that it intuitively meant for me – a female form with a strong connection to a familial lineage.

In Watsons work the vague triangular form appears and is described variously, in titles of art work, as heart/head/shield.⁸³ (Fig. 2.9).

The dog’s-head form seen in *headhunter* was drawn originally from the shape of Lawn Hill gorge in Waanyi country, but it is a shape that is visible throughout the world. Travelling to New Zealand in 2007, Watson saw it, emerging in Maori greenstone like the shape of a tooth, and has recognised it in other contexts as a uterine, female-vessel form or a water bag made from animal skin.⁸⁴

It appears again in the work *heart shield* 2008 (Fig. 2.10), and here Watson describes it as a familiar shape that she returns to again and again reminding her of a ‘...vessel, Lawn Hill Gorge, a woman’s shape...’⁸⁵

Prescription

The ‘Prescription’ series evolved from my research into Ethiopian Healing Scrolls. These healing scrolls are prepared by clerics in Ethiopia for individuals to use as protective talismans against illness and misfortune. They are long narrow objects traditionally made from parchment, the same height as the person they are meant

⁸³ The titles of all of Judy Watson’s work in the book *Blood Language* are printed in lower case to “...slip under the net, infiltrate our defences, further cleave away from the ‘high art’ model...” Martin-Chew and Watson, *Blood Language*, 14-15.

⁸⁴ Martin-Chew and Watson, *Blood Language*, 84.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 154.

to heal. They contain text and image and are used as 'prescriptions' for the individual.⁸⁶ In effect the cleric has diagnosed the individual's affliction and written them a prescription to use as a healing tool. The fact that the scrolls mimic the body in height, and contain symbols such as the eye, accentuates the ability for them to have an effect on the viewer. The anthropologist, Jacques Mercier, who curated an exhibition of the healing scrolls in the Museum of African Art, New York in 1997 said "The scroll is a symbolic limit to the body, a doubling of the corporeal envelope."⁸⁷ (Fig. 2.11). So this subconscious recognition or identification in the viewer of the indexical 'doubling of the corporeal envelope' triggers a trance like state which then brings into focus the unwanted spirit for depossession. Mercier further remarks that when the spirit who possesses the body looks at the talisman (through the person's eyes) it leaves the body in fear.⁸⁸

My work has two distinct aspects and making and viewing them triggers different corresponding feelings in me. I perceive these to be related to the human body on various levels. The smaller sized 'Part to a Whole' series of works, (Figs. 2.12, 2.13), feel like aspects of the long narrow pieces. The 'Prescription' series, the large, long, narrow pieces feel like a prescriptive map of my body and psyche with built in 'devices' to adjust me back into equilibrium (Fig. 2.14, 2.15). In keeping with the belief that looking at an image can affect a positive change, I am 'prescribing' myself intuitive visual remedies. In effect, after going into a meditative state, I develop a prescription for myself culminating in the artwork which is both prescription and medicine. The smaller pieces function as a detail of the prescriptive pieces. They depict the inner workings of an individual 'device' on a molecular level. If the health of each molecule is sound then the whole is sound. The prescriptive pieces are comparable to an interface between the inner and the outer – the molecular and the outer physical body. It is the medicine. It is where adjustments and changes can be made.

The medicine men of the Navajo Indians use a sand painting process as part of a prescriptive healing ceremony. Different coloured sands, (but also cornmeal, charcoal, and flower petals), are utilised to form a circular shape that includes

⁸⁶ Mercier, *Art that Heals: The Image as Medicine in Ethiopia*, 46.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 95.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 95.

healing symbols on the floor of a ceremonial building.⁸⁹ The client to be healed is seated centrally in the circle and interacts through the symbol and ritual, as Krippner says "...with some of the basic forces and energies of nature."⁹⁰ (Fig. 2.16).

Ethiopian Healing Scrolls and Navajo Sand Painting were traditionally not considered to be art by their makers.⁹¹ Nevertheless they are important studies on visual features effecting a healing. What is common between them is that their makers have pre formed intent of the purpose of the objects. That is, they are made with the intent of healing the recipient. Another commonality is that the makers have an expertise as a healer in some form. In other words they have an existing experiential benchmark with which to judge the effectiveness of the image.

Ritual

The previous chapter discusses archetypal form as a crystallised outcome of embodied cognition that is a result of certain thoughts being channelled through the body in a ritualistic fashion. To that end, symbol is an integrated outcome of the initial thought or belief that has been processed through the body via ritual. Ritual plays an important role in both my art work and my spiritual life. To be able to 'prescribe' myself a visual remedy I first need to achieve a meditative state through a structured ritual that 'clears' the area of any unwanted energies and delineates a boundary or charged area in which to work. Victor Turner describes ritual such as this as a state of anti-structure. Not the exact reverse of ordinary reality but rather a liminal state when transformation is possible. If status, ideas, or motives need to shift then a period of liminality or anti-structure needs to occur.⁹² Structure and ritual are essential to be able to focus on the subject matter, to embody the form in a shamanic sense, and to present it in an indexical manner with the artist's hand, materially, in full view.

The art historian and critic Leo Steinberg suggested a mode of engagement with contemporary art, called 'evenly spaced attention' which can equally be applied to

⁸⁹ Krippner, "The Role Played by Mandalas in Navajo and Tibetan Rituals," 25.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Parezo, *Navajo Sandpainting: From Religious Act to Commercial Art*, 1.

⁹² Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 45.

the method I use for making art as I do for viewing it. In his book *Other Criteria: Confrontations with 20th Century Art* he suggests that the viewer reserve any past judgements of art relating to personal or cultural taste and allow the work the space to reveal its meaning: "...to feel along with it as a thing that is like no other."⁹³ This method of suspended judgement and 'evenly spaced attention' feels like a very shamanic state to operate from. When making an art work in that state my perception operates at its optimal level and meaning is unambiguous. There is a sense that the object of attention is utterly unique and fresh. It is a felt impression rather than an intellectual concept. It is modifying one's system of ordinary reality, to transpose oneself onto or over another – human, animal, or mineral.

Line

The hand drawn white lines that overlay the surface in the 'Transducer' series in my later work developed through an active physical involvement in the painting process (Figs. 2.17, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21). With the large format series of works the physicality of the process has become important. When working on the floor or on a large table surface I am able to circumambulate the paper, working from all sides. This enhances the possibility for subtle and uninhibited shifts in movement of the physical body as it relates to the subject matter.

The painting 'Lemniscate' (Fig. 2.22), was the first to use this line work over the whole surface. In one of the middle layers in that piece a whole pencil was used in the one rapid, continuous and cyclic movement in drawing the lemniscate form. At the time I was not sure what the motivating factor was in drawing the white lines over the surface, but now I view them as transducing the intense and sometimes chaotic energy of the mark making into something more universally understood. The writer Mark Levy refers to repetitive and interwoven line as relating to the Chinese notion of *chi* or the energy body, and also as a product of prolonged looking, either during a meditation practice or not.⁹⁴ In referring to the Aboriginal shaman he says that:

⁹³ Steinberg, *Other Criteria: Confrontations with 20th Century Art*, 63.

⁹⁴ Levy, "Altered Consciousness and Modern Art," 331.

The “strong eye” practice entails standing in a particular pose while trying to maintain nonfocused attention on a landscape over an extended period of time. Nonfocused attention causes diminution of the internal dialogue - the projections that overlay experience – bringing about seeing instead of looking, a technique goes far beyond normal vision. The experience of energy lines is also common in advanced forms of meditation such as Kundalini.⁹⁵

In application, the repetitive line has a similar meditative effect as the dot, but by comparison it has a far more unifying feel due to its continuous, unbroken nature. Additionally, the optical effects of overlayed regularly spaced line not only disallows direct focus on a singular point, but by the eye moving back and forward in space, it suggests multiple dimensions.

Art as Meditation

Especially significant to this exegesis has been my discovery of non-figurative Tantric art painted by the *shilpi-yogin*, or ritual artist, and used as part of meditative practice in both historical and contemporary settings.⁹⁶ Ajit Mookerjee indicates that the important role of the *shilpi-yogin* was to translate their spiritual knowledge into an art form that could be used by adepts as tools for their own enlightenment.⁹⁷ French poet Franck Andre Jamme has, over twenty five years, collected contemporary Tantric images from Rajasthan, India. He was initially drawn to them “...because they were so simple, so powerful, so quietly and naturally abstract, so near, as well to my own field...poetry.”⁹⁸ (Fig. 2.23). One can sense the timelessness and the similarities of both the historical and the contemporary versions of the examples shown. In these and in the work of the all artists chosen for this exegesis is an element, almost ineffable but strongly felt, that compels me to stop and feel. It could be perceived that this is due to the archetypal nature of the forms and the universal concepts that they illustrate. But, as I have discovered, the key is to synthesise these sometimes cerebral theories with intuitive body based processes which then enables the maker and the viewer to arrive at a ‘recomposed neutrality of being’.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Levy, “Altered Consciousness and Modern Art,” 331-332.

⁹⁶ *Shilpi yogins* always remained anonymous and produced the work purely as part of the spiritual practice of themselves and others. Simple forms such as the egg shape, triangle and circle were used to reflect the simple but profound cosmology of Tantra.

⁹⁷ Mookerjee, *Tantra Art*, 35.

⁹⁸ Jamme, *Tantra Song: Tantric Painting from Rajasthan*, 13.

⁹⁹ Chadwick, In *Enfleshings: Helen Chadwick*, 9.

CONCLUSION

In the natural progression of a study that investigates spiritual notions of the archetype, the question inevitably arises of the archetypal meaning of my work. The answer presents itself evidenced in the synthesis of deeply held spiritual beliefs and the embodied nature of the art making process. It is, as I have come to understand, an engaging with the perception of duality, and by natural extension, non-duality. As explained in an earlier chapter, the teachings of some spiritual traditions are based on the concept of non-dualism. The goal of which is to overcome suffering by discriminating between one's true nature and illusion.¹⁰⁰

Indian philosopher, Jiddu Krishnamurti, wrote that "When man becomes aware of the movement of his own thoughts he will see the division between the thinker and thought, the observer and the observed, the experience and the experiencer. He will discover that this division is an illusion."¹⁰¹

In reflecting on this body of work I realised that I have arrived at a deeper and more complete understanding of the notion of non-duality. The images created through the embodied process reflect a distilled personal vision echoing, in pictorial form, the foundations of my spiritual beliefs. Embodied engagement with the materials – the fluid media, absorptive nature of the paper, reactive qualities of the spirit based ink – seems to have, through the medium of the archetype, revealed a portal that houses the sacred.

I knew that the foundational teachings of my various spiritual studies have been grounded in the concept of oneness and non-duality. I should not have been surprised that the archetypal forms I was working with, through the embodied process, were essentially visual manifestations of variations of the notion of non-dualism.

¹⁰⁰ Harrison, *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*, 62-63.

¹⁰¹ Krishnamurti, "The Core of the Teaching." Kinfonet, 2010.
<http://www.kinfonet.org/krishnamurti/excerpts/11/parts>

The dot in its repetitive form signifies cohesive connection to the cosmos.¹⁰² In its singular state it represents the concentrated creative origin that is condensed into a single point.¹⁰³ A cross with its confluence of the vertical and the horizontal infers a central point: the vertical and horizontal harmonizing each other via their proximity. The mandorla, a geometric merging of two circles, infers unification of two separate entities and, in addition, a single point at the centre of the overlap.¹⁰⁴

These archetypal forms, in concept and expression, may guide and direct the viewer's experience to a singular point, as it has done for me. That distilled point infers the metaphysical truth that is an indication of one's true nature, or the true Self. The sacred is revealed when the true Self is experienced and the illusion of duality, as Krishnamurti observes, is dissolved.

¹⁰² Mitter, "Per Adua ad Astra: Sohan Qadri's Life and Work," 18.

¹⁰³ Mookergee, *The Ritual Art of India*, 14.

¹⁰⁴ Wilson, "Pythagoras and the Mystery of Numbers", University of Georgia, 2013, <http://jwilson.coe.uga.edu/EMAT6680Fa06/Hobgood/Pythagoras.html>



Figure 2.1. Vikki Nash, *Part to a Whole Series: Cosmic Egg*, 2011, ink on paper, 35 x 25 cm each.

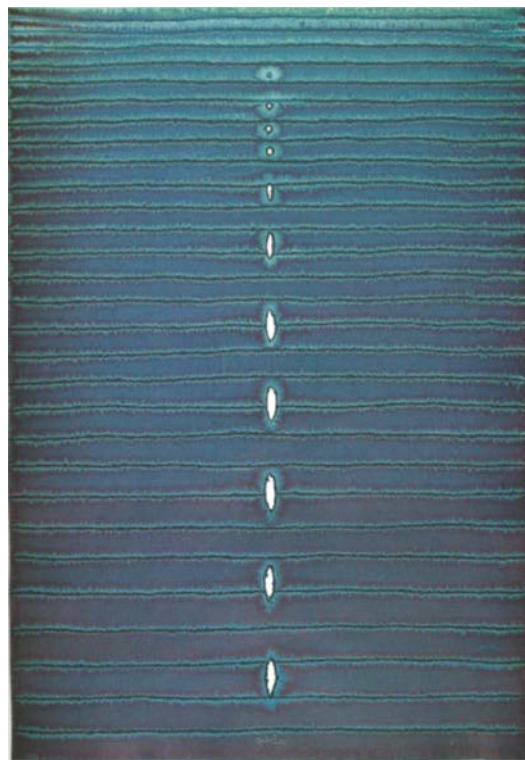


Figure 2.2. Sohan Qadri, *Asha 1*, 2002, ink and dye on paper, 115 x 84 cm.

<http://artsearch.nga.gov.au/Detail-LRG.cfm?IRN=77119>

Figure 2.3. Rover Thomas, *Roads meeting*, 1987, natural earth pigments and binder on canvas, 90 x 180 cm.



Figure 2.4. Vikki Nash, *Sense*, 2012, ink and conte on paper, 99 x 71 cm.

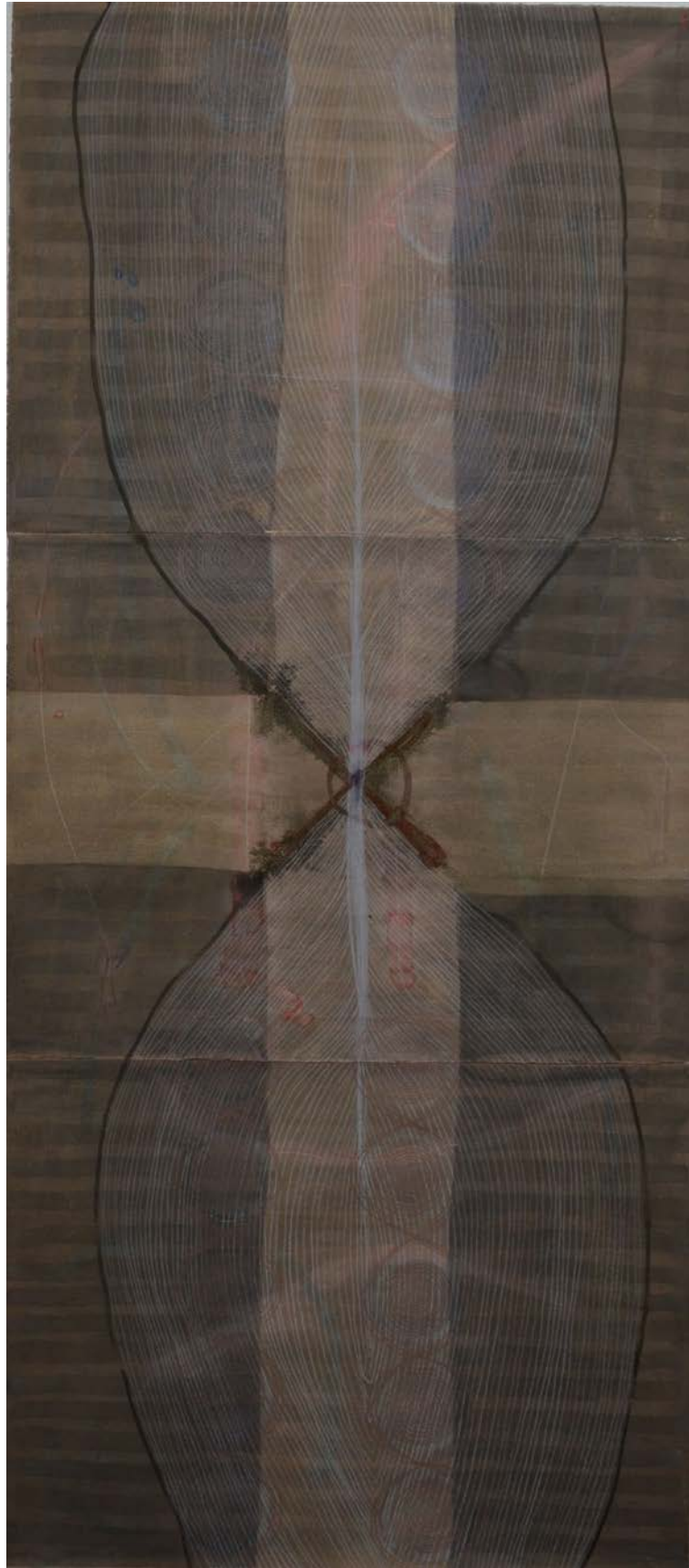


Figure 2.5. Vikki Nash, *Transducer Series: Cross*, 2013, Dye, ink and conte on paper, 159.5 x 74 cm.

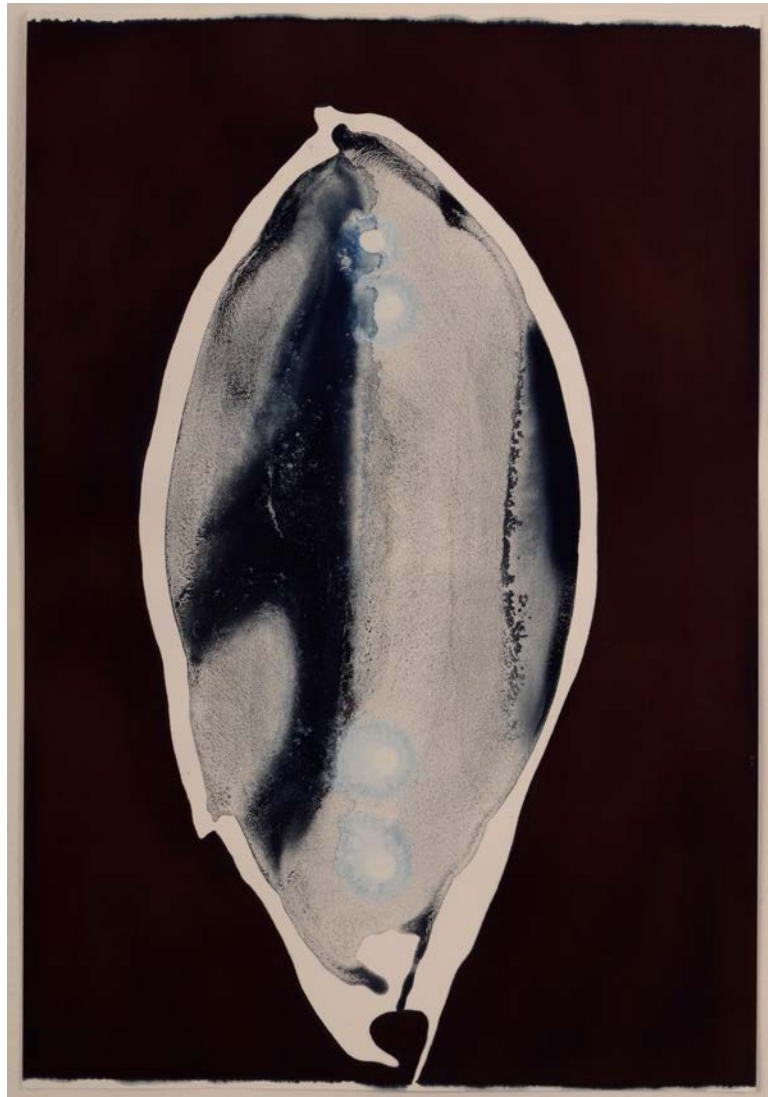


Figure 2.6. Vikki Nash, *Part to a Whole Series: Mandorla 1*, 2011, ink on paper, 48 x 33 cm.



Figure 2.7. Vikki Nash, *Prescription Series: Signifier*, 2013, ink and acrylic on paper, 153.5 x 70 cm.



Figure 2.8. Vikki Nash, *Prescription Series: Signifier*, 2013, Detail, ink and acrylic on paper, 153.5 x 70 cm.

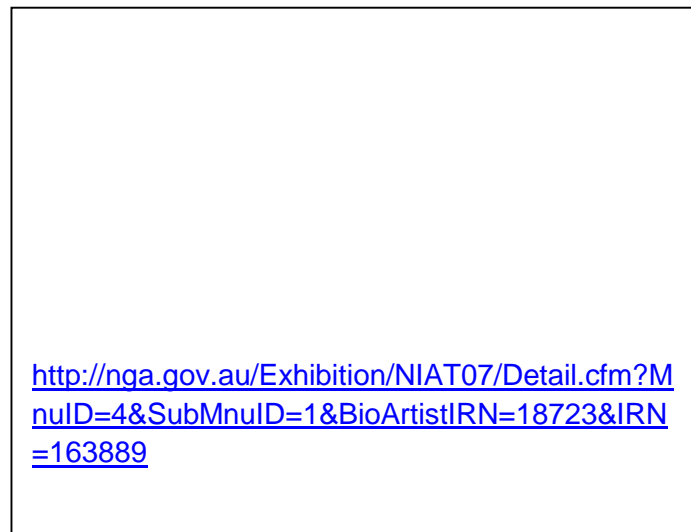


Figure 2.9. Judy Watson, *headhunter*, 2006, pigment, pastel, pencil on canvas, 192 x 103 cm.



Figure 2.10. Judy Watson, *heart shield*, 2008, ochre, pigment, watercolour, gouache, pastel and acrylic on canvas, 211 x 147.5 cm.

<http://www.freelancefarm.com/ordinaryaura/archives/000093.html>

Figure 2.11. *Ethiopian Healing Scroll*, 19th century, parchment and pigment.

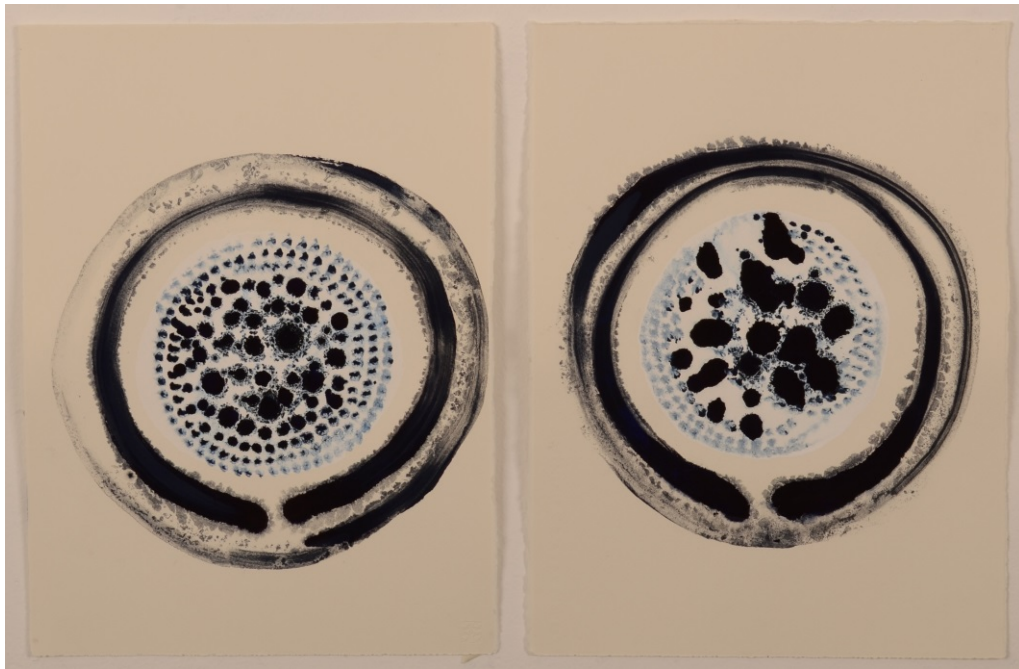


Figure 2.12. Vikki Nash, *Part to a Whole Series: Dual Mandala*, 2011, ink on paper, 38 x 28.5 cm each.



Figure 2.13. Vikki Nash, *Part to a Whole Series: Grail*, 2011, ink on paper, 38 x 28.5 cm.



Figure 2.14. Vikki Nash, *Prescription Series: Corporeal Ladder*, 2013, ink and conte on paper, 169.5 x 74.5 cm.



Figure 2.15. Vikki Nash, *Prescription Series: Corporeal Ladder*, 2013, Detail, ink and conte on paper, 169.5 x 74.5 cm.

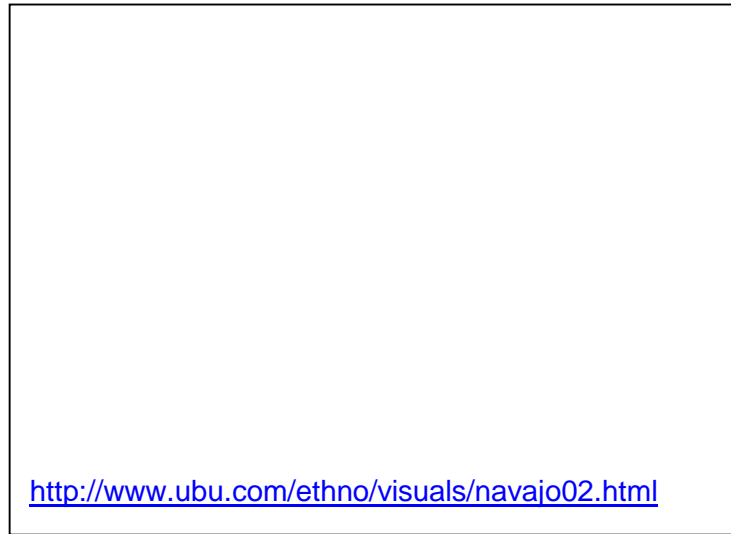


Figure 2.16. Miguelito, *Navajo sandpainting. Bead Chant*, coloured sand.



Figure 2.17. Vikki Nash, *Transducer Series: Dyad*, 2013, dye, ink and conte on paper, 150 x 101 cm.



Figure 2.18. Vikki Nash, *Transducer Series: Egg*, 2013, ink and conte on paper, 210 x 99 cm.



Figure 2.19. Vikki Nash, *Transducer Series: Egg*, 2013, Detail, ink and conte on paper, 210 x 99 cm.

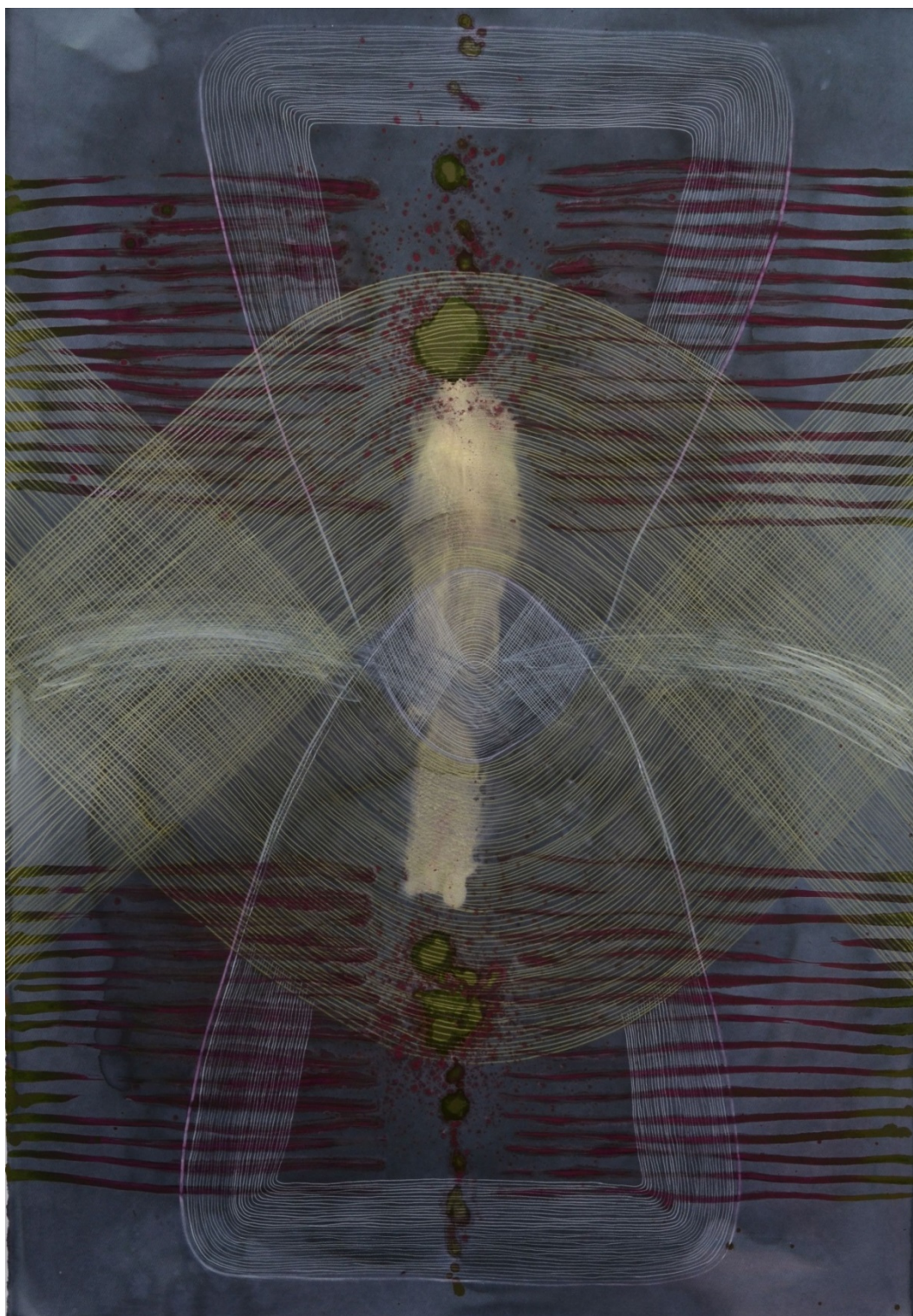


Figure 2.20. Vikki Nash, *Transducer Series: Merge*, 2013, dye, ink and conte on paper, 150 x 101 cm.

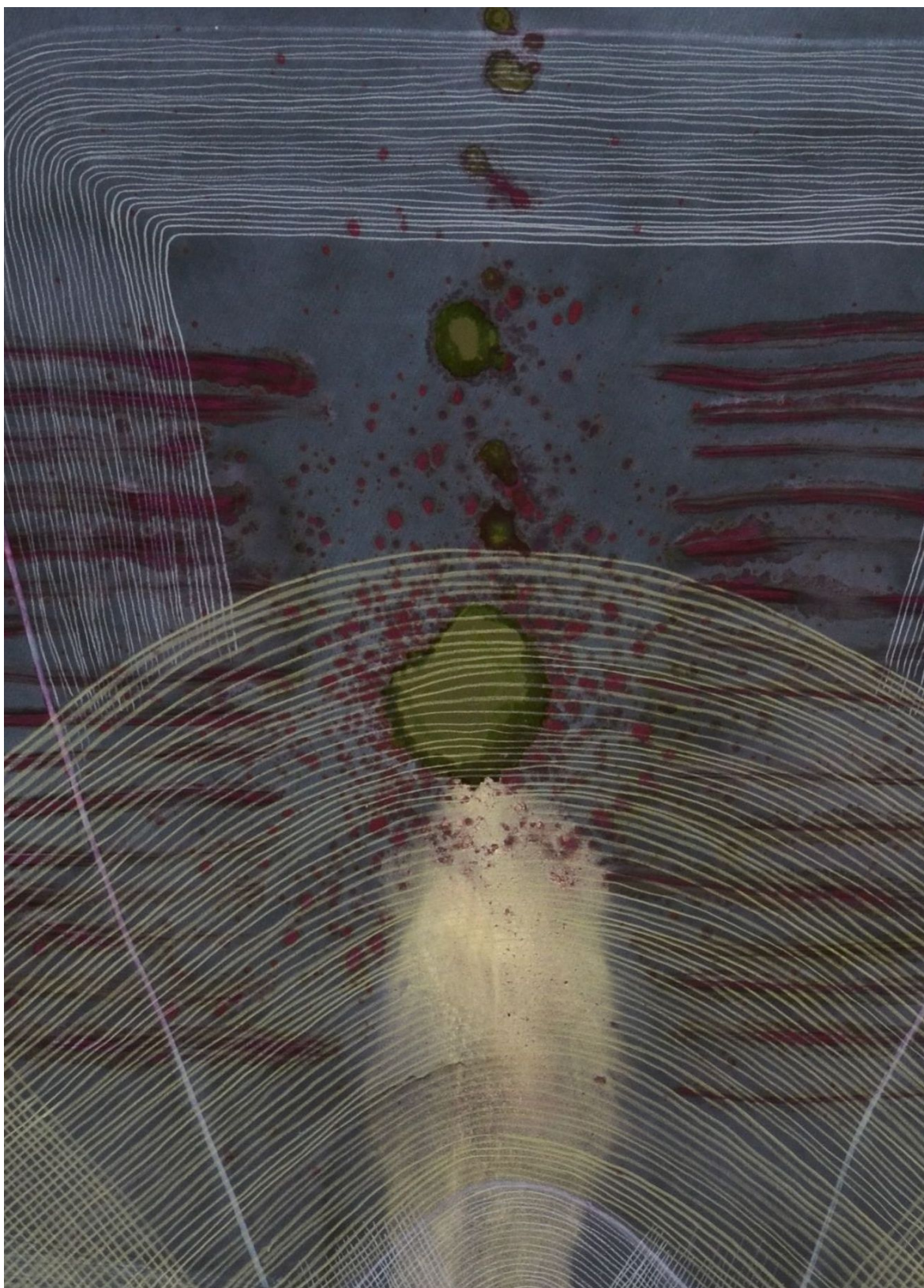


Figure 2.21. Vikki Nash, *Transducer Series: Merge*, 2013, Detail, dye, ink and conte on paper, 150 x 101 cm.



Figure 2.22. Vikki Nash, *Lemniscate*, 2011, ink, acrylic, graphite, conte on paper, 65 x 57 cm.



Figure 2.23. *Shiva Linga*, 2002, Rajasthan, gouache on paper, 36 x 26 cm.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baum, Tina. "Rover Thomas [Joolama]." National Gallery of Australia, 2010.
<http://artsearch.nga.gov.au/Detail.cfm?IRN=77119> (accessed July 18, 2013).
- Bell, Catherine. *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*. USA: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Bolt, Barb. "Painting is Not a Representational Practice." In *Unframed: Practices and Politics of Women's Contemporary Painting*, edited by Rosemary Betterton. 41- 61. London: I.B.Tauris, 2004.
- Best, Susan. *Visualizing Feeling*. London: I.B.Tauris and Company, 2011.
- Bird Rose, Deborah. "The Power of Place." In *Oxford Companion to Aboriginal Art and Culture*, edited by Margot Neale and Sylvia Kleinert, 40-49. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Boland, Katherine. About. <http://www.katherineboland.com> (accessed 7 March, 2013).
- Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1973.
- Camphausen, Rufus. *The Yoni: Sacred Symbol of Female Creative Power*. Vermont: Inner Traditions, 1996.
- Chadwick, Helen. In *Enfleshings: Helen Chadwick*, edited by Mark Holborn. New York: Aperture Foundation, 1989.
- Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. "Samvega: Aesthetic Shock". In *The Essential Ananda K. Coomaraswamy*, edited by Rama P. Coomaraswamy, 193-199. Indiana: World Wisdom, 2004.
- Deleuze, Gilles. *Proust and Signs*. London : Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008.

- Elbrecht, Cornelia. *The Transformation Journey: The Process of Guided Drawing: An Initiatic Art Therapy*. Germany: Johanna Nordlander, 2006.
- Eliade, Mircea. *Patterns in Comparative Religion*. London: Sheed and Ward, 1958.
- Geissler, Marie. "Marion Borgelt." *Craft Arts International* no. 63 (March 2005): 31-34.
- Green, Denise. *Metonymy in Contemporary Art: A New Paradigm*. Australia: MacMillan Art Publishing, 2005.
- Greenberg, Clement. "Towards a Newer Laocoon". In *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism Volume 1*, edited by John O'Brian, 23-38. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Harrison, Victoria. *Eastern Philosophy: The Basics*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2013.
- Henry, Michel. *Seeing the Invisible: on Kandinsky*. New York: Continuum, 1988.
- Jamme, Franck Andre. *Tantra Song: Tantric Painting from Rajasthan*. Los Angeles: Siglio, 2011.
- Johnson, Robert. *Owning Your Own Shadow: Understanding the Dark Side of the Psyche*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991.
- Jung, Carl. *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968.
- . *The Spirit in Man Art and Literature*. London: Ark Paperbacks, 1984.
- . *The Structure and Dynamic of the Psyche*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969.
- Krippner, Stanley. "The Role Played by Mandalas in Navajo and Tibetan Rituals". *Anthropology of Consciousness* 8, no.1(1997): 22-31. doi: 10.1525/ac.1997.8.1.22.

Krishnamurti, Jiddu. "The Core of the Teaching." Kinfonet, 2010.

<http://www.kinfonet.org/krishnamurti/excerpts/11/parts> (19 August, 2013).

Kuspit, Donald. "Meditation, Aesthetic Shock, and the Gladdening of Consciousness: The Icons of Sohan Qadri". In *Seeker: Art of Sohan Qadri*, edited by Anna Shen, 13-15. India: Mapin Publishing, 2004.

Lakoff, George, and Johnson, Mark. *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*. New York: Basic Books, 1999.

---. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Lawlor, Robert. *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1982.

Levy, Mark. "Altered Consciousness and Modern Art." In *Altering Consciousness: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Etzel Cardena and Michael Winkelman, 327-354. California: Praeger, 2011.

Luxford, Phe. "Gleaning Nature". Catalogue essay for *Covering Ground*. Los Angeles: University of La Verne Harris Art Gallery, 2011.

Lynn, Victoria. *Marion Borgelt*. Roseville East: Art and Australia, 1996.

McKenzie, Janet. *Contemporary Australian Drawing #1*. South Yarra: Macmillan Art Publishing, 2012.

Martin-Chew, Louise, and Watson, Judy. *Blood Language*. Australia: Miegunyah Press, 2009.

Mercier, Jacques. *Art that Heals: The Image as Medicine in Ethiopia*. Germany: Prestel, 1997.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge, 1962.

Mitter, Partha. "Per Adua ad Astra: Sohan Qadri's Life and Work." In *Sohan Qadri: The Seer*, edited by Paolo Gribaudo, 11-25. Milan: Skira Editore, 2001.

Mookergee, Ajit. *Ritual Art of India*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1985.

Mookergee, Ajit. *Tantra Art: Its Philosophy and Physics*. New Delhi: Ravi Kumar, 1966.

Mookergee, Ajit, and Khanna, Madhu. *The Tantric Way: Art, Science, Ritual*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977.

Munn, Nancy D. "Excluded Spaces: The Figure in the Australian Aboriginal Landscape". *Critical Inquiry* 22, no. 3 (1996) 446-465.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344017>

Parezo, Nancy, J. *Navajo Sandpainting: From Religious Act to Commercial Art*. Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1983.

Perkins, Hetti. "One Sun One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia." In *One Sun One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia*, edited by Theresa Willstead, 11-15. Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2007.

Pinkola Estes, Clarissa. *Women Who Run With the Wolves: Contacting the Power of the Wild Woman*. London: Rider, 1992.

Rawson, Phillip. *The Art of Tantra*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1978.

Smith, Anthony. *Archetypes Revisited: An Updated Natural History of the Self*. London: Brunner-Routledge, 2002.

Spate, Virginia. "Concerning the Spiritual in Art: A Sceptical Essay." In *Spirit and Place: Art in Australia 1861-1996*, edited by Nick Waterlow and Ross Mellick, 76-80. Sydney: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1996.

Steinberg, Leo. *Other Criteria: Confrontations with 20th Century Art*. London: Oxford University Press, 1972.

Sternberg, Esther. *Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Wellbeing*. Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009.

Stevens, Anthony. *Ariadne's Clue: A Guide to the Symbols of Humankind*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

Tagore, Sundaram. "The Seer: Origins and Influences." In *Sohan Qadri: The Seer*, edited by Paolo Gribaudo, 123-133. Milan: Skira Editore, 2001.

Tacey, David. *The Jung Reader*. East Sussex: Routledge, 2012.

---. *Reenchantment: The New Australian Spirituality*. Australia: Harper Collins, 2000.

Turner, David. "Images of Transcendence: The Art of Warnindilyakwa." In *One Sun One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia*, edited by Theresa Willsted, 111-115. Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2007.

Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995.

Turrell, James. "Bindu Shards," 2013, <http://jamesturrell.com/artwork/bindu-shards/> (accessed 19 August, 2013).

Verrips, Jojada. "Offending Art and the Sense of Touch". *Material Religion* 4, no. 2 (2008): 217. doi:10.2752/175183408X328316.

Walsh, Roger, and Vaughan, Frances. "On Transpersonal Definitions". *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* 25, no. 2 (1993): 199-207.

Watson, Judy. "Judy Watson: In Conversation." In *One Sun One Moon: Aboriginal Art in Australia*, edited by Theresa Willsted, 304-309. Sydney: Art Gallery of New South Wales, 2007.

Wilson, Jim. "Pythagoras and the Mystery of Numbers." University of Georgia. 2013. <http://jwilson.coe.uga.edu/EMAT6680Fa06/Hobgood/Pythagoras.html> (accessed 4 April, 2011).

Wiltshire, Donna. *Virgin, Mother, Crone: Myths and Mysteries of the Triple Goddess*. Rochester: Inner Traditions International, 1994.

Zakia, Richard. *Perception and Imaging*. Boston: Focal Press, 2002.